



# WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. of L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR  
HEADQUARTERS

No. 33.

801-809 G ST. N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.  
FRANK MORRISON, SECRETARY SAMUEL GOMPERS, PRESIDENT

## PRESIDENT GOMPERS' REPORT

Introductory Portion Clearly Enunciates Fundamental Principles of American Federation of Labor.

Atlanta, Ga., Nov. 18.—After the preliminaries were completed the thirty-first annual convention of the American Federation of Labor listened to President Gompers' report, the striking introductory passages of which are herewith presented: "The ground-work principle of America's labor movement has been to recognize that first things must come first. The primary essential in our mission has been the protection of the wage worker, now; to increase his wages, to cut hours off the long workday, which was killing him; to improve the safety and the sanitary conditions of the workshop; to free him from the tyrannies, petty or otherwise, which served to make his existence a slavery. These, in the nature of things, I repeat, were and are the primary objects of trade unionism. Our great Federation has uniformly refused to surrender this conviction and to rush to the support of any one of the numerous society-saving or society-destroying schemes which decade by decade have been sprung upon this country. A score of such schemes, having a national scope, and being for the passing day subject to popular discussion, have gone down behind the horizon and are now but ancient history. But while our Federation has thus been conservative, it has ever had its face turned toward whatever reforms, in politics or economics, could be of direct and obvious benefit to the working classes. It has never given up its birthright for a mess of pottage. It has pursued its avowed policy with the conviction that if the lesser and immediate demands of labor could not be obtained now from society as it is, it would be mere dreaming to preach and pursue that will-o'-the-wisp, a new society constructed from rainbow materials—a system of society on which even the dreamers themselves have never agreed. \* \* \* It matters little whether any party, whatever its avowals and intentions, succeeds in one place or another, now and again, in this state or that. The things desirable, in contrast to party organization, methods, war cries and promises, are those resulting in permanency of efficient methods, in possibilities of advancing one by one the propositions favorable to the wage-workers, and in the opportunities for the full play of the powers of all the individuals of the community capable of promoting through legislation the welfare of the country and especially of the masses. This condition is being rapidly established, as we have said, through the energy and activity and concentration of aim of the

American Federation of Labor. No other scheme of procedure for the advancement of the interests and well being of the working classes measures up with the policy of our Federation in the slightest degree. The history of the working class movement of Europe in recent years is one of recession from cloud-land utopias and of approach toward the policy of our Federation. Revolution is to come by way of reform, and not by social cataclysm. The human conscience is to be society's guide. The social struggle is to be good and right against evil and wrong. The attainment of the maximum of liberty for every individual, the abolition of poverty, the best order in the production and equitable distribution of wealth--in a word the establishment of the conditions for the highest possible earthly happiness for mankind--all this must come through taking the best that civilization has given us and lopping off, one by one, its imperfect growths and its baneful excrescences."

#### BOSTON CITY LABORERS

Boston First City in United States to Retire City Laborers on Half Pay After 60 Years of Age.

Boston, Nov. 18.--The laborers' pension act which this city will put into operation March 1, 1912, is the first instance of a municipality in America providing retirement with half pay to its laborers. There has been a persistent effort made for years to establish this pension or a similar one. Power was conferred by the last legislature to inaugurate such a law in Boston, the salient portions of which are as follows: "(1) There shall be a retirement board for the laborers employed by the city of Boston consisting of the mayor, the auditor and the treasurer of the city, who shall discharge the duties hereby imposed upon them without additional compensation. (2) Any laborer employed by the city of Boston, who has reached the age of 60 years, and who has been in the service of the city for a period of not less than 25 years, and who is physically incapacitated, shall, at his request, and with the approval of the retirement board, be retired from service, and shall receive for the remainder of his life an annual pension equal to one-half the compensation which he received during the last year of his service for the city. It shall be the duty of said board to retire any laborer in the service of the city who has reached the age of 70 years and has served the city for a period of not less than 25 years." Fewer than 40 come under the compulsory retirement provision, while the total number eligible to pension is 177.

#### INCUBATING ANOTHER TRUST

Washington, Nov. 18.--A searching investigation of existing telegraph and telephone rates is believed to be foreshadowed by demands which have been filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission in the form of petitions, directing the attention of the commission "to the apparent purpose of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company to monopolize all facilities for wire communication." While the commission was given jurisdiction over telegraph and telephone lines under the last amendatory act of the interstate commerce law, no effort has as yet been made to exercise its authority with reference to fixing rates. The petitions which have been filed recite many instances which tend to confirm the belief that a general combination of transmission companies is in process of formation, and the commission is urged to at once take the matter up.

## TO CARE FOR EMPLOYEES

Head of Department of Agriculture Urges Rights of Federal Workers Be Recognized and Protected.

Washington, Nov. 18.—The secretary of agriculture is out with a statement declaring that the federal government should take a deeper interest in its civil employees, both while they are in active service, as well as after they have reached the age of retirement. He has suggested that the government receive such part of the civil service employees' earnings as they voluntarily desire to save and invest, interest being paid upon the sums placed in the hands of the government. After these employees reach the age of retirement, or if they are injured or incapacitated for duty, the plan provides for an adequate retirement and pension system. "Men and women who have faithfully served the government, and who have passed the age when they cannot do the work required of them, should be cared for by the government to which they have given the best years of their lives," says the secretary. "I would not turn an old employee out upon the world without visible means of support any more than I would turn out an old and faithful horse. I would put the old horse—as I have done in the past—out in a pasture with the colts and let him kick up his heels and enjoy life." The efforts of the American Federation of Labor to effect the passage of employers' liability, workmen's compensation and other humanitarian legislative enactments are having far-reaching influence in directing public opinion. As a result of persistent agitation the officials of the government are coming to realize that measures must be taken to adequately safeguard the rights and best interests of not only the employees of the government itself, but also of the workmen of the entire country.

## OPERATORS WIN INCREASE

Washington, Nov. 18.—Amicable agreements between the telegraph operators and officials of the Southern Railway and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, by which the employees of the former will receive an increase of 12% and those of the latter a 6% increase, have been reached. Shorter working hours and other concessions were also granted. The operators on the Southern Railway will receive \$120,000 more annually. The agreement on the Southern Railway was reached through negotiations conducted between the General Manager of the road and representatives of the Telegraphers, while the Baltimore & Ohio differences were reached by Judge Martin A. Knapp of the United States Court of Commerce, and Charles P. Neill, Commissioner of Labor, who acted as mediators. In addition to the 12% increase in salary, the Southern Railway operators are to receive fifteen day's vacation each year, it is stated. On the Baltimore & Ohio, the operators who were formerly working eleven hours, will now go to the ten-hour shift, and in "three men" offices the hours will be eight. These changes took effect November 1.

## BUTCHERS GET RAISE

Louisville, Ky., Nov. 18.—What portended to be a serious wage difficulty between the butchers' union and a packing company in this city has been amicably adjusted. A wage raise of from 2 to 5 cents per hour has been granted, and organization recognized.

## METAL TRADES DEPARTMENT

James O'Connell Re-Elected President and Will Devote His Entire Time to Organization Under Salary.

Atlanta, Nov. 18.—Many matters of importance to the Metal Trades were discussed at the recent convention of the Metal Trades Department, and arrangements have been made to materially strengthen the organization during the coming year. Owing to the fact that the Secretary's work has become extremely heavy, the President of the Department has been directed to give his entire time to the work of the Department, a salary being provided therefor. It was decided that a meeting of the representatives of the various affiliated Internationals should hereafter be held at least four times a year, the object being to get closer co-operation between the different organizations in the Department. A resolution was also passed asking the assistance of the American Federation of Labor to help the Metal Trades Department to discourage the introduction of the Taylor system now being inaugurated in some of the arsenals and other workshops where guns and equipment are turned out. The new officers elected are: President, James O'Connell; First Vice President, J. F. Valentine, President of the Molders' Union; Second Vice President, J. W. Kline, President of the Brotherhood of Blacksmiths; Third Vice President, J. F. Franklin, President of the Brotherhood of Boilermakers; Fourth Vice President, F. D. Daly, President of the Metal Polishers; Secretary A. J. Berres, Pattern Makers League.

## OHIO PROGRESSIVE STATE

Secretary of State Federation of Labor Asserts Coming Constitutional Convention Will Adopt Up-to-date Constitution.

Cleveland, Nov. 18.—The Secretary of the Ohio State Federation of Labor, Harry D. Thomas, is authority for the statement that Ohio is in the list of progressive states; an overwhelming majority of the delegates to the constitutional convention being pledged to the initiative and referendum, with a splendid opportunity of incorporating the recall. About a dozen union men have been elected as delegates, four having been elected from the city of Cleveland and the others from different portions of the State. Messrs. Farrell of the Waiters, Davio of the Fathers, Stillwell of the Painters, and Thomas of the Amalgamated Carpenters being the local delegates. Great credit is due the Cleveland unionists in securing the election of men to represent them in the coming convention.

## NEW POSTAL RULING

Washington, Nov. 18.—A new ruling by Postmaster-General Hitchcock, recently issued, is of interest to all trade unions having official publications. This latest ruling grants a full year as the period in which the publications are entitled to the second class privilege after subscriptions have expired. This action rescinds such existing rules providing for varying periods of acceptance, ranging from three months to a year, according to the frequency with which the publication is issued. The new regulation gives publishers greater opportunity to secure renewal of subscriptions.

#### AMENDMENT TO BE URGED

Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee Makes Important Announcement Ament Labor Legislation.

Washington, Nov. 18.—It is reported that specific amendments to the Sherman Anti-Trust Law to remedy defects in the original enactment and to eliminate from it the "rule of reason" test which the United States Supreme Court wrote into the law, have been prepared by Representative Henry of Texas, Chairman of the House Committee on Rules and Ranking member of the Judiciary Committee. It is asserted that Mr. Henry will press the bill for immediate consideration before the Committee on Judiciary. Violation of the law is made a felony with imprisonment in the penitentiary of from two to ten years.

The bill exempts from the operation of the law members of organizations, or associations not formed for profit and without capital stock, and agricultural products or live stock in the hands of the producer or raiser. This latter exemption has been what the American Federation of Labor has been contending for, and if this exemption is enacted into law the Sherman Anti-Trust Law can then be enforced according to the original intentions of those who formulated and sought its passage.

It is further stated that the Judiciary Committee of the House has decided upon a revision of the injunction statutes and the laws regulating indirect contempt cases. A law providing for trial by jury in cases of indirect contempt of court and modification of the injunction are regarded as necessary to carry out the pledges as expressed in the platform of the Denver National Democratic Convention.

#### CLERKS GET SALARY RAISE

Washington, Nov. 18.—Several hundred clerks employed by the Southern Railway Company of this city, have been granted an advance in salary, ranging from five to fifteen per cent, according to length of service, the increase taking effect November 1.

#### TEXTILE WORKERS AFFILIATED

Washington, Nov. 18.—The United Textile Workers of America at their last convention took action to affiliate with the International Federation of Textile Workers' Association. The membership of the International Federation is approximately, 430,000, with headquarters in England.

#### TAXICAB STRIKE ENDS

London, Nov. 18.—The big taxicab strike in this city has been settled and the men are back on their machines. The employers have agreed to their terms pending a report by an arbitration commission.

#### "LABOR AND CAPITAL"

San Francisco, Nov. 18.—Under the auspices of the Federation of Shop Men of the Harriman lines, there has been produced the labor drama, "Labor and Capital", at the Valencia theatre, for the purpose of raising funds for the shop men now on strike.

## INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

Efforts Are Being Put Forth to Have Labor's Bill in Congress Enacted Into Law the Coming Session.

Washington, Nov. 18.—The American Federation of Labor has been for the past several years championing the passage of an industrial vocational education bill. Congressman Wilson introduced at the extra session, H. R. 12156, "to co-operate with the states in encouraging instruction in agriculture, the trades and industries and home economics in secondary schools, in maintaining instruction in these vocational subjects in State normal schools, in maintaining extension departments in State colleges of agriculture and mechanic arts, and to appropriate money and regulate its expenditure." The companion Bill in the Senate is, S. 3, introduced by Senator Page of Vermont. While the American Federation of Labor has been the pioneer in the agitation to secure this character of legislation, there are several forces at work along the same line. Congressman Wilson has devoted much time to the consideration of this measure, and so has Senator Page. The Southern Commercial Congress with headquarters in Washington, is at the present time, sending out a large amount of literature for the purpose of urging those interested to interview their Congressmen and Senators, for the purpose of securing the passage of these Bills. It is a meritorious cause, and every assistance should be afforded those who are actively engaged in an effort to secure this legislation.

## RAILWAY CONCESSIONS

London, Nov. 18.—The railway servants of this country are very emphatic in their disapproval of the report handed down by the Royal Inquiry Commission, and it is difficult to determine what the final result will be. English papers, however, are printing statements to the effect that a portion of the railway managements have already granted an increase in wages, and that other roads are to advance wages likewise. According to the London Times, the increases already announced amount to an annual cost to the Great Western Railway, of from \$280,000 to \$390,000; London and Northwestern Railway, \$400,000; Caledonian Railway, \$50,000. The arrangements on the Midland Railway is that no adult employed, to receive less than 22s. per week in London; 20s. a week in certain large towns; and 19s. a week elsewhere.

## PAPER IS RIGHT

London, Nov. 18.—Reynolds' Newspaper editorially says, "It is false economy on the part of the employer to attempt to cut down expenses by placing young and inexperienced persons in positions of trust. The Central London Railway has just prosecuted a boy booking clerk for stealing tickets. Apart from the shareholders interests, it is not fair to the boys to place them in positions of such responsibility before their characters are formed and hardened."

Practically all of the carters at Greenock, Scotland, are out on strike.



### "CHILD PEDDLERS ON STREET"

Chicago, Nov. 18.—The Record-Herald, in an editorial under the above caption, has this to say: "It is impossible not to sympathize with these earnest friends of childhood who are making an effort to prevent boys and girls under 14 from peddling gum, flowers, candy, or anything else in the streets—including vice centers—at all hours of the day and many hours of the night. Who has not been pitifully appealed to and followed by little vendors after theatre hours, even on cold winter nights? These children should be taken off and kept off the streets. The mayor has promised Miss Addams, Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen and other social workers of the city to look into the matter and do what he can under existing laws. So far so good. We may add, however, that women like Miss Addams and Mrs. Bowen will not stop here. They will doubtless send competent persons to investigate the home life and conditions of every child peddler ordered off the streets. Where the few cents the poor children occasionally earn are an item in the family budget; where a widow or deserted wife is perhaps forced to lean on a child of tender years, other and better assistance will certainly be supplied. The right reform spirit is constructive and helpful, and this is the spirit of the Juvenile Protective league and of the social settlements."

### DEMANDS FOUND REASONABLE

Vancouver, B. C., Nov. 18.—The Federal Investigation Board on the Grand Trunk Railway dispute between Edmonton and Winnipeg, has found that the demands of the strikers were reasonable and that the company was unjustified in its objections. The Federated Trades on strike, asked for the recognition of a representative on grievances, a 9-hour work day, definition of trades schedule agreement and the fixing of a minimum wage. The company refused to recognize the Federation representatives until the Machinists and Boilermakers quit work. The findings of the Federal Investigation Board will undoubtedly have great influence in bringing about an adjustment.

### REFUSE TO BE STRIKE BREAKERS

Washington, Nov. 18.—Fourteen boilermakers, not members of the Boilermakers' union, were offered jobs at Albany, N. Y., but upon arriving found they were to be used as strike breakers. Although the men were without money they refused to go to work, having been deluded into coming to accept regular employment. A similar instance occurred in Sedalia, Mo., where sixteen men, some of whom had families with them, were shipped in on the promise of steady employment, not being informed of the strike in progress. These latter also refused to be used as strike breakers.

### EIGHT-HOUR LAW ENFORCED

Holyoke, Mass., Nov. 18.—The employees of the Chicopee electric light department are to be put on the eight-hour day. Alderman O'Connor, a member of the street car men's union, has been active in having the law enforced in the city departments. While there have been many delays the union councilman has finally been successful in having the law generally observed.

## LABEL TRADES ELECTION

John B. Lennon Retires as President and J. F. Tobin of Boston Elected to Succeed Him.

Atlanta, Ga., Nov. 18.—The Union Label Trades Department, after transacting a large volume of business and making provision for the coming year, proceeded to election of officers, as follows: President, John F. Tobin, president of the Boot and Shoe Workers International Union of Boston; first vice president, John W. Hays, secretary-treasurer of the International Typographical Union of Indianapolis; second vice president, Jacob Fischer, secretary-treasurer of the Journeymen Barbers' International Union of Indianapolis; third vice president, Owen Miller, secretary of the American Federation of Musicians of St. Louis; fourth vice president, T. A. Rickert, President of the United Garment Workers of Chicago; fifth vice president, A. McAndrew, president Tobacco Workers International Union; secretary-treasurer, Thomas F. Tracy, Cigarmakers' International Union of Boston. Mr. Lennon declined to become a candidate for re-election.

## PRISONER IN OWN JAIL

Pittsburg, Nov. 18.—Former Sheriff John E. Shields of Westmoreland County, who was sentenced to two years and four months in the Western penitentiary for perjury; is a prisoner in his own jail, his conviction growing out of the coal strike in the Westmoreland fields last year. Shields was one of the active spirits in fighting the sheet and tin workers during the strike against the Steel Trust at New Kensington, Apollo and Vandergrift in 1909. He made himself conspicuously obnoxious in various ways to Organizers Arthur E. Holder and Jeff Pierce of the American Federation of Labor, during the progress of the strike; these organizers having been detailed to assist the strikers. At last, Shields "got his".

## ACTION TAKEN TO TEST LAW

Columbus, O., Nov. 18.—The state treasurer has refused to honor a warrant issued by the state auditor to pay a voucher executed by the state liability board of awards. This action has been decided upon in order that the new law may be put to the test in the courts, with the end in view that if it runs counter to any provision of the constitution it can be determined as soon as possible, in order that any defect may be remedied by the next legislature, or become a subject for the coming constitutional convention to deal with. Information is to the effect that aside from the state legal department eminent counsel will also assist the state in defending the law.

The Supreme Court of the United States decided that moving pictures based on the scenes of a copyrighted book may constitute infringement of the copyright on the book on the reserved right to dramatize.

State Labor Commissioner Van Duyn of Iowa, has instituted a crusade against Greek bootblacks, who are importing youngsters from Greece, in the shining parlors, in violation of the Contract Labor Laws.



## IN FAVOR OF PENSIONS

Washington, Nov. 13.—Secretary of the Treasury McVeagh will make the pension retirement system for Government clerks a feature of his annual report to Congress; he states: "I always have favored the contributory system of pensions, and favor it with the best interests of the clerks in view. The contributory system will be the easiest to have Congress enact into legislation, as there is strong opposition in some quarters to any other pension system. Under a regular pension system the clerks would have to serve many years and reach old age before becoming beneficiaries. Under a contributory system the pensions would follow for their family when they leave the service. The greatest difficulty in the adoption of a pension system for clerks seems to be the division of opinion as to the best plan."

## FOR INJURED WORKMEN

Toronto, Nov. 13.—Chief Justice Sir William Meredith has been in this city to receive suggestions from the various interested Canadian organizations for the proposed compensation to injured workmen act upon which he is working. The necessity for a radical change in the act was emphasized by the labor men, who for the most part were strongly in favor of the British system of arbitration. The commissioner, while expressing no definite preference, appeared to favor the system in the state of Washington, where injured workmen are given compensation out of a fund raised by the state by a tax upon the employers.

## PROMINENT ENGLISH VISITOR

New York, Nov. 13.—Thomas Chambers, the general treasurer of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union of Great Britain and Ireland recently arrived in New York. Mr. Chambers will attend the coming convention of the International Seamen's Union, to be held in Baltimore, and it is said that after the convention he will make a number of addresses in this city and other places. He was one of the valuable aides of J. Havelock Wilson in building up the British Seamen's union, which prosecuted the recent successful strike. Mr. Chambers returns to England in January.

## PORTO RICO DELEGATES

Washington, Nov. 13.—The delegates in attendance at the convention of the American Federation of Labor at Atlanta, Ga., from Porto Rico are Santiago Iglesias, general organizer of the American Federation of Labor; Joaquin A. Becerril of the Bricklayers and Masons' union of San Juan, and Rafael Alonso, Typographical union No. 478. Mr. Becerril is the editor of the labor paper, Voz del Obrero. Senor Alonso is secretary of the Free Federation of Workingmen of the Island of Porto Rico.

## STRIKERS MEET IN CHURCH

Jackson, Tenn., Nov. 13.—The strikers on the Illinois Central railroad were proffered and accepted the First Baptist church in which to hold a mass meeting recently. Addresses were made by prominent labor men and the auditorium was packed and the auditors enthusiastic.

## MINISTERS FAVOR UNION

Milwaukee, Nov. 18.—The weekly news service of the American Federation of Labor gave wide circulation recently to the action taken by the Baptist ministers of Minnesota in adopting a minimum wage scale of \$700 a year for unmarried and \$900 per year for married ministers. As a result there has come about a general discussion in other states relative to the feasibility of its general adoption. Particularly in this state there has been much favorable comment, it being recognized that many of the pastors are not remunerated sufficiently for the services performed.

## GARMEN ORGANIZED

Great Falls, Mont., Nov. 18.—After combatting the opposition of the officials of the Great Northern Railway, a local lodge of the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen of America has been established in this city. It will be known as "Rainbow Lodge", and started in with a membership of over fifty.

## MINERS WILL DEMAND INCREASE

Pottsville, Pa.—The miners of the anthracite region in convention decided to make a demand for an increase in wages, the 8-hour day, and recognition of the union, after the contract expires in March next. Other demands were also formulated, one regarding the weighing of coal, and the check-off system.

## MINERS LOSE LIVES

Pittsburg, Nov. 18.—Eight miners were killed in the Adrian shaft of the Rochester, Pittsburgh Coal and Iron Company's mine located four miles from Punxsutawney, Pa. Fifty miners who entered the shaft hours after the accident, in an attempt to effect a rescue, were driven out by gas. The work of rescue was abandoned pending the arrival of the mine rescue car from the government station here. After the arrival of the car, six bodies were recovered.

## TO FIX PUDDLERS' WAGES

Pittsburg, Nov. 18.—The bi-monthly examination of the steel shops of the Republican Iron and Steel Company, was held on November 13, at the general office of the corporation at Youngstown, Ohio, for the purpose of fixing the wage scale of the Puddlers for November and December. This is the usual manner of determining the wage scale, it being based upon the current price of the product produced. It is not expected, owing to the backward condition of the iron market, that wages will be advanced.

## EMPLOYMENT BUREAUS SUCCESS

St. Paul, Minn., Nov. 18.—The state free employment bureau in this city broke all records for the month of October, in both the women's and men's departments, showing a big increase over 1910. In St. Paul and Minneapolis combined employment was found for 3,540 men and 1,691 women. The employment office at Duluth found employment for 1,440.